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The Jesus Christ.

THE

PASSION,

P O E M.

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of the New York and New Jersey

Bar Association, New York

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PAID TO ORDER

T H E

The Rev. Dr. COLQUETT.

Reverend SIR,

AS you are a known admirer of the Graces, without any formal introduction, this Poem trusts itself to your protection: The veracity of the subject sufficiently recommends it, tho' your penetration and delicacy may disprove it a work of genius; the rule of scripture is carefully followed, and the inventive matter cautiously managed: And where can a divine Poem better present itself than to the sanction of a Divine, whose pious and moral character, purity and uniformity of manners, with native goodness of disposition, make silent the whispers of the most exceptions? Their bigotted enthusiastic notions are incapable of nice distinctions, and draw conclusions but from ceremony and forms. The intention too lays claim to your care, whatever the piece may want from aid of Art, or grace of Nature;

A
for

for as the heart is preferable to all temples, Sincerity should take place of Taste and Ornament. I shall tease you no farther with apology; and shall only observe, that this time is most proper for such a work, the very season wherein the great and necessary end of Man's salvation was accomplish'd; which should remind us of our obligation of thanks: But admonition is your part, and to be better'd by the instruction, the duty of,

Reverend S. I. R.,

Your most humble Servant,

Edm. April 4th,
1760.

The AUTHOR.

T H E

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P A S S I O N.

HA I L Seraphs! hail! immortal sons of light!
Hail Cherubs! wrapt in circling glory bright;
Hail all ye Hosts of Heav'n! the song inspire;
Fill all my soul with your celestial fire;
Elate the Muse on your æthereal wings:
The pensive Muse the suffering JESUS sings.
No HELICONIAN aid can raise the song,
Nor all the glories of th' AONIAN throng;
No common fancy can my lays inspire,
For sacred themes sublimer strains require.
Th' angelic choirs alone I now implore,
Whilst above PINDUS I attempt to soar.
O arduous task! presumptuous bard, restrain
Your daring flight, nor quit the humble plain:
There safely carol, thro' the rolling year,
The waste of war; or paint the Virgin's fear
Of slighted love, while her fond Shepherd hears
The soft complaint, and equal fondness bears;
Free from ambition you insure success,
Your numbers please, and Swains your labour bless;

Nor.

Nor impious dare, yet uninspir'd, essay,
 Where but the pure in heart can find the way.
 Then, LORD, that upright heart bestow on me;
 Blot out my errors, each impiety;
 With ev'ry gift of grace my soul improve,
 The fire of zeal, attemper'd with pure love.
 Angels assist me; aid the work divine;
 And inspiration breathe in ev'ry line.

WHERE the soft flow'rs in gay profusion reign,
 To chear the sense, and deck the velvet plain;
 Where fruits the happy garden amply stor'd,
 Wholesome repast, to load the plenteous board;
 In yonder arbour, where the cypress shade
 The sun's bright beams, for melancholy made;
 Behold your JESUS groaning on the ground!
 Ye Heav'ns re-murmur, and ye Skies resound;
 Behold that GOD, who late in glory shone,
 Sweat drops of blood, for what vile man has done;
 See prostrate JESUS to his Father pray,
 The bitter cup of death might pass away,
 "But yet not mine, thy holy will be done,
 "Father of Mercies!" spoke the sorrowing Son.

WHILST

WHILST our Redeemer spoke, in grief profound,
 Ambrosial fragrance spread along the ground;
 The ruffled winds to balmy breathings turn,
 And panting there in whisp'ring breezes mourn;
 The list'ning rills scarce o'er the pebbles creep;
 In silence roll the waters to the deep.
 All Nature stood attentive; Fate was nigh,
 When ev'n the GOD, the Lord of Life, should die!

ASSISTING Angels, from the throne of heav'n,
 Pitying descend; and strength divine is giv'n.

LO! now, a ruffian band, by fury led,
 Arm'd as for war, ISCARIOT at their head,
 With black intent to take, by dark surprize,
 That GOD whose mercy caus'd the dead to rise;
 Whose pow'r, they wiw'ness'd, taught the dumb to sing,
 The deaf to hear, the lame his crutch to fling,
 On dark'ned eyes bestow'd the light of day,
 And sent the leper cleans'd and heal'd away,
 Order'd the winds within their caverns sleep,
 And hurricanes no more deform the deep;
 In temples heard him preach the word divine;
 Wond'ring they heard, and call'd from heav'n a sign;

B For

For who but GOD could scan the human mind,
 Man's thoughts declare, or thought in embryo find:
 He whom they heard with rapture and surprize,
 By furies fir'd, give up a sacrifice.
 A kiss, emblem of holy friendship giv'n,
 A JUDAS kifs, betrays the Lord of Heav'n:
 By impious hands the Saviour of mankind
 Is bound, scourg'd, spit on, and to death consign'd.
 With common thieves the lot of CHRIST is set,
 The price of blood must pay the sinners debt.
 Derisive in his hand a sceptre see;
 They hail him King, and mocking bend the knee;
 A crown of thorns his holy temples wound;
 His cross, and suff' rings bend him to the ground.
 O Earth! ungrateful to creation's Lord,
 Canst these the tributes you can best afford?

By all neglected, and forsaken, see
 The LAMB of GOD, nail'd to th' accursed tree,
 Devoutly to his Father lift his eyes
 And fervent pray——“ Forgive my enemies,
 “ My GOD! my GOD! with my departing breath
 “ Forsake me not, but comfort me in death.”
 Descend,

Descend, descend-ye heav'nly Angels high,
 Wait round MESSIAH, now condemn'd to die;
 Your lutes, your harps, and all your timbrels string,
 And Man's Redemption be the strains you sing.

WITH scorn, the wicked shake their heads and nod;
 Insulting say, If CHRIST be Son of GOD,
 Let him the cross, and all its pangs resign,
 We shall believe, and own the Pow'r divine.
 Others he sav'd, himself he cannot save
 From scorn, reproach, from shame, and from the grave.

SEE the remorseless Soldier pierce his side!
 Water and blood rush out, a precious tide,
 To wash the sins away of human race,
 Thro' faith in CHRIST, to Man a special grace.

WHY rests the thunder in th' Almighty's hand?
 Or ling'ring vengeance spare a guilty land?
 Why does all Nature keep its usual frame?
 Why burst not clouds? Or, why is heav'n the same?
 Why all serene and quiet in the sky,
 Whilst the great GOD, the Source of Life can die?

How

How can the Sun still dart his brilliant fire,
 And see a SUN, a brighter SUN expire?
 How can the Jews thus torture so their King,
 Who but from dust made their creation spring?
 Can he no better thanks than these obtain?
 Do you reward his benefits with pain?
 With taunts revile him in his latest breath?
 Exult and triumph in his pangs of death?
 Heart-rending thought! A voice thro' Nature cries,
 The God! the God! the Lord of Glory dies!
 Then suddenly the thunder roar'd aloud,
 And broke impetuous thro' each yielding cloud;
 Down from their goals the peals with fury fly,
 And breathe forth lightning thro' the nether sky:
 The Heav'ns inverted shut the doors of light,
 Wrapt o'er the universe a sable night.
 Th' affrighted Sun withdrew his fulgent head,
 His beams were hid, and all his glory fled,
 And yawning graves gave up their numerous dead.
 The lofty hills from their fix'd basis nod,
 And in convulsive fits confess'd the dying G O D.

